



MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting: Downtown Planning Team Meeting #5

Date: February 21, 2018

Time: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Location: Central Library Auditorium

Attendees:

Santiago Jaramillo, VIA

Ben Perry, UTSA

Stephanie Barrera, UTSA Student

Folad Aurangzib, UTSA Student

Anei M. Swan, UTSA Student

Susan Guinn, City Attorney's Office

Thomas Davis, Roosevelt Park NA

Mitch Hagney, Food Policy Council

Vincent Michael, SA Conservation

Society

Danny Khalil, Centro San Antonio

JD Simpson, SA Bike Share

Mariah Kilbourne, disABILITYsa

Susan Powers, Lone Star

Neighborhood Association

Ruth Morris, LOOP

Elizabeth Kertesz, SA 2030 District

Steve Graham, San Antonio River

Authority

Nicholas Melde, Lavaca

Neighborhood Association

Maria Nelson, Centro

Danny Khalil, Centro

Kristian Gutierrez, Able City

Tony Diamond, McCullough Avenue

Consortium

Mario A. Pena, Able City

Rhea Roberts, COSA

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of Planning Team Meeting #5 was to review and discuss focus areas and input from the second Community Meeting, as well as consider catalytic sites and review and discuss housing and economic development issues and strategies.

Meeting Format

The Downtown Regional Center Project Manager, Jacob Floyd presented an update on the planning process, and an overview on the focus areas identified by the Planning Team, followed by an introduction and brief description of catalytic sites. Next, Matthew Prosser, Vice-President of Economic and Planning Systems presented on housing and economic development issues, opportunities and potential tools. The presentation involved discussion and explanation on opportunities for housing and economic development.

This memo provides highlights of the meeting discussion organized into sections that reflect the primary discussion topics:

Revised Focus Areas

The focus areas, along with their character, purpose and building heights were presented to the team and discussion related the character, purpose and building heights was encouraged. The Planning Team generally agreed with the presented visions of the five focus areas and offered additional items for consideration. It was agreed that corridor improvements and connections are key catalysts to development and Houston Street was emphasized as a mixed use corridor, as was Probandt as a way to connect to the missions. The planning team encouraged the expansion of Focus Area 3 (Lone Star) beyond the bounds of IH-10 to reach the adjacent neighborhoods and interface with the San Antonio River. The Planning Team also suggested the under-freeway parks and open space opportunities be

expanded from IH-10/IH-35. The idea of an additional focus area for the “Downtown Core” was also presented to the Planning Team with little discussion.

Catalytic Sites

Following the discussion of the focus areas two potential catalytic sites for the plan area were presented. The Planning Team generally agreed with the two areas and offered the following comments:

- Alamedome Parking/Sunset Station
 - Parking needs will still need to be accommodated for events at the Alamedome.
 - Any conceptual plan will need to illustrate ways to address pedestrian safety with the challenges posed by the active rail line.
 - The area should be activated and well connected to the west under the highway. Illustrate ways to eliminate physical barriers, including transformational ideas like land bridge strategies.
 - This site could leverage VIA’s work around St. Paul’s Square and the Robert Thompson Transit Center
- Rail to Trail
 - Illustrate ways to address pedestrian safety with challenges posed by active rail line.

The Planning Team also offered the following additional sites to consider:

- The area around the UTSA Downtown Campus
 - Potential for public/private partnership opportunities
- The area south of IH-10-closed meatpacking plant
 - Create connections between the neighborhood and the downtown core
 - May require mitigation of site contamination

Housing Strategy Overview

After the discussions on focus areas and catalytic sites, Matt Prosser of Economic Planning Systems presented housing objectives, case studies, and strategies applicable to the plan area. Below are a few of the highlights from the presentation. The entire PowerPoint presentation is available in the Documents Library of the Downtown Regional Center Sub-Area Webpage.

- The Downtown area has more one-person and non-family households than the City as a whole, and households have lower household income than the city overall.
- The housing stock is largely split between lower density single-family homes and mid-high rise apartments. Approximately 80 homes and 2,590 apartments have been built since 2010 and 24% of all housing units in the downtown area are in buildings with 50 or more units.
- Housing in the Downtown Regional Center plan area is generally more expensive than the city-wide average and becoming less affordable.
- Barriers to Housing Development include:
 - Market Barriers:
 - Infill and redevelopment i costly with unpredictable conditions. Higher prices are needed to overcome costs. Downtown projects are achieving rates that support infill, resulting in new development that may not be affordable to area residents.



- Historic character and designations can complicate development without clear direction on requirements and desire aesthetic. Existing zoning can be difficult to develop new housing projects in. Rezoning risk may deter developers.
- Capacity for Growth:
 - There is an estimated 466 acres (public and private land) available for development or redevelopment. Growth forecasts for the area range from 18,500 to 28,700 new units by 2040.
- Housing challenges to address include the potential for displacement of existing residents, preserving historic character, reinvesting in older housing stock, and maintaining opportunity for all household types and incomes.

In addition to the challenges above, the Planning Team discussion included the use of the “Annual Median Income” metric related to housing affordability, voluntary vs. involuntary residential displacement, and the redevelopment of public land for affordable housing. The challenge of determining where density should go and the challenge to housing development presented by the market values of hotels.

Economic Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunity, and Challenges

Following the presentation on Housing, Matt Prosser presented on the economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges in the Downtown Regional Center area. Below are a few key points from the presentation:

- Employment in the area is primarily healthcare, public administration, and accommodations. There is a growing resurgence of office workers and a burgeoning start-up scene.
- Economic Strengths include: Status as a tourist and convention visitor destination, cultural and entertainment center of the city, historic character, concentrations of employment in professional services, and major quality of life amenities.
- Economic Weaknesses include: Small non-public administration office employment base and lack of sizeable new office space, domination of tourism oriented uses, high percentage of land devoted to supporting tourism is relatively underutilized.
- Economic Opportunities: Downtown tech/innovation district, center for education, historic/arts/culture/entertainment destination, vibrant neighborhood commercial business districts.
- Economic Challenges: growing the Downtown office employment base, leveraging benefits of tourism and mitigating impacts, increasing connectivity to the area.

Next Steps

The sixth Planning Team Meeting will take place April 12. Preliminary objectives for this meeting include:

- Input on the Downtown Plan area future land use policy and plan

If you have questions about the Downtown planning project, please contact Project Manager Jacob Floyd, City of San Antonio Planning Department.

Email: jacob.floyd@sanantonio.gov Phone: (210) 207-8318

Meeting summaries and presentation will be available on the project website:

<https://downtown.sacompplan.com>



DOWNTOWN PT #5

- ▶ CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS ARE KEY
 - HOUSTON AS A MIXED-USE CORRIDOR EMPHASIS
- ▶ CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS WILL HELP CATALYZE DEVELOPMENT
- ▶ PROBANDT EXTENSION OF MIXED-USE AS A WAY TO CONNECT TO MISSIONS
- ▶ INVEST IN SIGNAGE/WAYFINDING RELATED TO MISSIONS
- ▶ TIE INTO MCCULLOUGH EFFORTS
- ▶ EXPAND UNDER FREEWAY OPPORTUNITIES FROM I-10/I-35

- ▶ CONSIDER FOCUS AREA 3 EXPANSION BEYOND JUST I-10 TO REACH N'HOODS & INTERFACE W/WATERWAYS

CATALYTIC SITES

- ▶ ALAMODOME - PARKING NEEDS WILL STILL NEED TO BE ACCOMMODATED
- ▶ ILLUSTRATE WAYS TO ADDRESS PED. SAFETY W/RAIL LINE CHALLENGES
- ▶ ACTIVATE & CONNECT UNDER THE HIGHWAY
- ▶ ILLUSTRATE WAYS TO ELIMINATE PHYSICAL BARRIERS

- ▶ TRANSFORMATIONAL IDEAS LIKE LAND BRIDGE STRATEGIES
- ▶ LEVERAGE VIA'S WORK ON ALAMODOME SITE
- ▶ UTSA AREA AS CATALYTIC SITE POTENTIAL
 - WESTSIDE PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
- ▶ S. FLORES & MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS TO/FROM MISSION & DOWNTOWN
 - INCLUDING MITCHELL ST.
- ▶ SOUTH OF I-10 MISSION CONNECTION FROM N'HOOD INTO DOWNTOWN CORE

- ▶ OTHER HIGHEST & BEST USES SOUTH OF I-10
 - BE MINDFUL OF MITIGATING SITE CONTAMINENTS



PT # 5 Housing

- ▶ How many S.F. homes?
 - # rental units?
- ▶ **AMI** a complicated metric to use.
- ▶ Best practices re: displacement?
 - there is going to be displacement
 - Voluntary vs. Involuntary
- ▶ Provision to keep housing affordable on reded. of Public land
 - Control type of housing
- ▶ **Challenges**
 - Data skewed to N. hood
 - ▶ Accessibility of older / historic homes
 - ▶ Preservation of exist. homes
 - tax increases

Challenges - Housing

- ▶ ID. where density goes
- ▶ Continue to attract amenities + services that support dense M.U.
 - grocery, schools, etc.
- ▶ Renter affordability
- ▶ Housing happening on edges / Not in the core
- ▶ Land prices \Rightarrow Hotels
 - \$\$
- ▶ Cost of parking - development

Economic Development - Challenges

- ▶ Mechanical / Energy efficiency upgrade costs "P.A.C.E."
- ▶ High demand - low supply of Daytime office parking
- ▶ Housing supply vs. # of workers
- ▶ Schools - Quality + Quantity (Housing challenge too)
- ▶ Trail-oriented development (Opportunity)
- ▶ Street Street (TXDOT) \rightarrow need sidewalks (East \Rightarrow West connectivity in general)
- ▶ Connectivity within Downtown as well as out
- ▶ Physical barriers - Hwy's, etc.

Housing & Economic Development discussion notes at Planning Team Meeting #5

